The number of specialized high schools in Japan has been decreasing, and they have had to merge due to a decrease in the number of enrollments and unpopularity of attending this kind of high school. For business education, an increased focus on business English is one of the ways to increase interest in business schools. Therefore, the purpose of this present research is to investigate how business English students change their attitudes towards their abilities and motivations, and how teachers think about the changes of their students’ attitudes. This paper focuses on the following research questions: 1) What kind of groups can be found with reference to acquired abilities and motivations?, 2) What kind of abilities and motivations did students develop through various business activities in the lessons?, and 3) How do teachers view changes in their students’ acquired abilities and motivations?  

This research comprises of five chapters. Chapter 1 provides a theoretical background of the present study. The first section discusses two levels of intrinsic motivation with a four-phase model of interest development. It is important that teachers identify where their students are in these motivational stages to gauge their awareness. After the intrinsic motivation theory, self-regulated learning theory is introduced. Students developed different learning strategies through activities in the class and they changed their learning strategies to improve their skills. Teacher language awareness is then introduced in the next section. The last section discusses the Common European Framework of Reference for Language for deciding which domain should be focused on in the research.

Chapter 2 shows the overview of the entire research design regarding the purposes, the data elicitation and the data analyses of two studies. A questionnaire was employed for Study 1 and 2, and teachers’ interviews were also employed for Study 2 to support students’ perception. 

Chapter 3 reports on the results and findings of the quantitative analysis of Study 1. This chapter is
related to the first research question. The main purpose of
data elicitation in this study is to see the learners’
characteristics based on abilities (Communication skills,
English proficiency, and Business skills) and motivations
(Enjoyment, Willingness to Continue Learning, and
Meaningfulness) using a cluster analysis. The analysis
classified four clusters in the first and second grade, and
two clusters for the third grade. To support the result of
the cluster analysis, open-ended questions were also
analyzed to find keywords for each question of each
cluster. The findings here were as follows: the majority of
students were motivated by the lessons, and some of the
students were not motivated by the lessons. One of the
possible reasons is their English proficiency.

Chapter 4 discusses findings from the
qualitative analysis of Study 2. This chapter showed that
there were five points of salient awareness through these
lessons. First, students’ self-understanding was enhanced.
Second, students were also able to understand others
more. The first and second findings were related. They
had to think about others to convey their thoughts
properly, and to do that they needed to understand
themselves. Third, they became aware of the importance
of presentations in business. They realized the importance
of presentation skills in business occasions. Therefore,
they also realized the importance of the clarity of their
speech in order not to cause any misunderstanding among
their audience but to attract them. Fourth, the differences
between spoken and written English were raised in
students’ awareness. Students usually learn written
English in English class, but they learned it is not always
appropriate to use the expressions they learned in English
class. They were also aware of difference in nuances
between the two languages. Therefore, to think in English
from the beginning about what they want to say is one of
strategies. Last, they realized there were a lot of things
they do not know about the world as well as their own
country. It seems gaining the new knowledge is one of
their motivations. These findings were supported by
teachers’ interviews. In addition, teacher language
awareness is also looked at in this study.

Finally, Chapter 5 concludes with some
pedagogical implications for promoting importance of
business English for the future of business education.